

REMARKS

The Official Action dated 23 September 2004 has been carefully considered, along with cited references, applicable sections of the Patent Act, Patent Rules.

The disclosure is objected to because of several informalities.

In response, the disclosure has been amended according to the Examiner's suggestions.

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the reference character "41" not mentioned in the description.

In response, the specification has been amended to include the reference character "41", such that the drawing figures are not required to be amended. NO DRAWING AMENDMENT IS REQUIRED.

Claims 7 and 11 are objected to because of several informalities.

In response, claims 7 and 11 have been amended according to the Examiner's suggestions.

Claims 1-7, 9, AND 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,394,291 to Maier-Hunke.

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 3,408,032 to Francis.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Francis in view of U.S. Patent 4,917,343 to Wainscott.

However, the Examiner has kindly indicated that claims 8 and 11-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim,

but would be allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, claims 15-17 which have been rejected in view of the art have been cancelled, so that it is unnecessary to discuss the grounds of rejection specific thereto.

Claim 8 which is indicated to be allowable has been deleted, and has been included into claim 1. Claim 7 to which claim 8 is dependent thereon has also been deleted and has also been included into claim 1.

Claims 2-6 are dependent on the amended claim 1. Claims 9 and 10 have been amended to be dependent on the amended claim 1.

Claim 11 which is indicated to be allowable has been written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 12 is dependent on the amended claim 11. Claims 13, 14 are dependent on claim 12.

Accordingly, claims 1-6 and 9-14 would appear to be allowable, and early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is accordingly most respectfully solicited.

Courtesy and cooperation of Examiner MORRISON are appreciated.

respectfully submitted,

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